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PORTRAIT
OF
HENRY WINTER DAVIS, ESQ.
BY HIS OWN HAND.

HIS POLITICAL INCONSISTENCIES DAGUERREOTYPED IN COLORS WARRANTED NOT TO FADE, AS HIS PRINCIPLES HAVE ALWAYS DONE,
UNDER THE CORRODING TOUCH OF TIME.

1863

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It may prove both profitable and interesting about this time to show by his own writings what are the principles professed and avowed by Mr. H. Winter Davis, the Know-Nothing candidate for Congress. The principal data which we have for those principles are to be found in three documents, viz: "The War of Ormuzd and Ahriman, in the Nineteenth Century, by H. Winter Davis, published by James S. Waters, No. 244 Baltimore street, in 1852;" "The Origin, Principles and Purposes of the American Party," a pamphlet, the authorship of which is admitted by Mr. Davis, in the correspondence between him and Mr. May, already before the public; and lastly, the Report of Mr. Davis' Speech at the Assembly rooms in Hanover street, accepting his nomination for Congress.

To show up his glaring inconsistencies on each and every subject of public interest, I shall submit, under appropriate heads, extracts from his writings referring to the page of each document emanating from his pen.

I. IN REGARD TO FOREIGNERS.

The H. Winter Davis of 1852 flies to greet the foreign exiles from all lands, especially naming the *Irish*, and he fears nothing from "foreigners," though they may come hither "by hundreds of thousands." This position of Mr. Davis is fully made out in the following extracts from pages 344, 345, 347, 348 of his war of Ormuzd and Ahriman:

"No where is a blow struck for freedom without their prayers for its success—their cheers for its triumph—their

tears for its failure. They utter in no measured terms their detestation of its enemies, and fly to greet the exile on their hospitable shores. The sufferings of the Irish, convicted of ill-advised patriotism,—the heroic countrymen of Kosciuszko, escaping from the ruins of their falling country,—the heroes of Hungary, betrayed by those they trusted and hastening to save their enemies the stain of their blood—all are met with outstretched arms: and people and government delight in doing honor to the persecuted children of liberty. They symbolize their devotion in the persons of those who have suffered in its cause; and the people roll after him whose name is for ever blended with Hungarian freedom—like some tidal wave that swells from shore to shore. * * * *

“But the nation which is thus resplendent in the arts of peace and the light of liberty, wears its gorgeous robes over armor of steel.

“This people, so ardent, so sympathetic, so devoted, has passed in seventy years from the gristle of unformed youth to the bone and sinew, the developed form and well knit limbs of perfect manhood. Its territory is no aggregate of conquered districts, filled with hostile and lukewarm nations. It has expanded from less than a million to more than three millions of square miles, washed by the lakes and the gulf on the north and the south, and by the two great oceans on the east and the west—and embraces the body of the continent in its domain. Its merchant vessels whiten every sea, and its commercial marine equals or surpasses that of any other nation—inexhaustible in materials for the best and most powerful navy in the world. A population such as the world cannot equal fills with the hum of industry this vast territory. Its cultivation, its thought, its language and literature, its habits and manners are the same, and so strong is its individuality and so powerful is its faculty of assimilation, that the hundreds of thousands of European emigrants of every nation, language, and condition sink into its bosom—like rain drops into the rivers, swelling their current while indissolubly blending with their waves.”

* * * “We should lay aside the arrogant boast that however the genus *human being* may prevail in Europe, the species *man* flourishes only in America. We leave to despots as the only defence of their iniquities the humbling suggestion of the unfitness of the people of Europe for the blessings and securities of liberty.”

In 1855 Mr. Davis is an aspirant for Know-Nothing honors, and then *presto change*—he is no longer the friend but the deadly foe of *all foreigners* who desire to seek shelter under the stars and stripes of our flag.

Witness the following extracts from pages 24 and 25 of his pamphlet, entitled "The Origin, Principles and Purposes of the American Party:"

"Now the immigration is the exodus of the enslaved millions of Europe, Irish, Dutch, Germans, Italians and French, who, despairing of freedom at home, and having proved their incompetency for self-government *in fact*, flying from the lost field, throw themselves on our hospitality and abuse it by selling themselves as a mercenary army to decide our elections. They renounce their *foreign allegiance* but not their *foreign feelings*. They will not coalesce with *American citizens* nor *cherish American principles*.—They remain a *distinct class*, voting apart, living apart, *forming foreign associations*, political, social and military, and demanding from political employers their share of political patronage. Not content with living on us and governing us under existing laws, they propose to improve them. They aspire to play reformers; and insolently form associations and devise plans to improve our homely American liberty into the likeness of the bloody and drunken dream of French and German liberty. They are no more *American in heart* than they are *in birth*, in language or in blood. They come flaming from the furnace of *rebellion and civil discord*, where oppression has perverted liberty into anarchy and confounded the authority of law with lawless tyranny, and fall like firebrands in our midst to disturb and exasperate the sedate and moderate conduct of American politics.

II. IN REGARD TO OUR POLICY TOWARDS EUROPEAN NATIONS, THEIR STRIFES, WARS AND INSTITUTIONS.

In 1852 he was the friend of Kossuth, and the propagandist of a crusading spirit of American armed intervention in European wars, and especially the earnest advocate of an alliance, offensive and defensive, with England, our most *formidable adversary*.

Witness the following extracts from pages 367-8, 393-4, 428-9, of the war of Ormuzd and Ahriman:

"I maintain it to be the dictate of high policy, whenever the battle shall be joined in earnest in that final conflict between freedom and despotism, which is unavoidable and may not be remote, to display the banner of the Republic in the cause of the rights of nations and of man, for our own defence.

"A wise precaution spontaneously suggests the opening of diplomatic conferences with England, that the two free nations of the world may face together their *common foe* in that day of trial.

"They who stand with their backs to the future and their faces to the past, wise only after the event, and refusing to believe in dangers they have not felt, clamorously invoke the name of Washington in their protest against interference in the concerns of Europe. With such it is useless to argue—till they learn the meaning of the language they repeat.

"The opinions of a great statesman who on other grounds reaches the same conclusion are entitled to more respectful consideration. On their side—but not of them—rises the majestic form of Henry Clay—for forty years accustomed to guide the foreign and domestic policy of the republic. His venerable name outweighs the arguments of other men. His wide experience and practical sagacity give, with the men of his day, to his divinations of the future, the weight of history. His voice also is for peaceful indifference. Yet the counsels of his youth were in a different tone. His life is now a thing of the past. His country remembers that he is passing away. * * *

"To seize the *first opportunity* by suitable alliances to meet and overthrow them, to divide their power, to substitute free for despotic governments, to *support* by money and *arms* nations which by our aid with that of *England*, can maintain themselves, is therefore the plainest dictate of common sense. Washington would have been the first to see and provide for the coming storm. If he could not avoid it, he would have hastened to dispel ere it reached maturity. He would not have been so simple as to call alliances for such a purpose 'leaving our own to stand on foreign ground.' He would rather have said, it is leaving our own that we may meet and repel our foes from the sacred home of our liberties. * * * * *

If God shall put it again in the hearts of the people to rise with simultaneous resolution against their oppressors

as in 1848, and shall bless their efforts by again placing their rulers at their mercy and liberty within their grasp, then this Republic should not stand still and see them overborne by combinations of *foreign arms* and domestic treachery. She should not hesitate to *improve* the precious opportunity which Providence affords. She should display the banner of *freedom* in aid of *our* struggling brethren, and fling *her sword* into the trembling scale which weighs the *destiny* of the world.

"We must *be ready* to make costly sacrifices of blood and treasure. Despotism will deliver terrible battle *ere it loose its gripe* on the neck of man : and the next battle will be the final and decisive one. It will be no passing cloud; but neither sun nor stars shall appear for many days after its fury bursts over the world : and they who love fair weather and smooth seas should pray that that day be put far from them."

In 1855 he takes the *back track* on this subject, and goes against intervention in foreign affairs. Witness the following extracts from pages 46 and 47 of his pamphlet:

"Our *foreign* policy is that of the Father of his Country—which has guided it in safety and honor from infancy to manhood—in extending our commercial relations with European Nations to have with them as *little political* connection as possible."

"The time has come 'when we may choose peace or war' as *our interests* guided by justice shall counsel; and *our* interests are the sole criterion.

"Our policy *is* peace; we wage no war but for the *attainment* of peace. We steer clear of all permanent alliances; we are not implicated in the European scuffle for the balance of power; we will assume no guarantee of national independence; we are *no armed propagandists* to enforce *non-intervention* on European despots; we leave *Europe to her fate* till Europe threatens *our* safety or meddles with our interests; and then we meet and repel in arms the aggression from *whatever quarter* it come.

"Our policy is not to meddle with European concerns *which do not* concern us; and to repel the *meddling* of European nations with American concerns which do not concern them.

"These principles we have proclaimed in Philadelphia and *ratified* in Baltimore; and by them we are willing to be judged."

III. IN REGARD TO THE NATURALIZATION LAWS.

In 1852, as the Electoral candidate of the Whig party he advocated the election to the Presidency of Gen. Scott, with a full knowledge that Gen. Scott's principles in favor of speedy naturalization went far beyond the principles of the Democratic party on the present term of five years. Witness the following letter of Gen. Scott written in 1852:

Dear Sir : As I have already said in my letter accepting the nomination for the presidency, I am in favor of the naturalization laws as they stand, with the single addition, viz: give the full right of citizenship to every foreigner who shall in time of war serve one year on board any United States ship-of-war, or in any regular militia or volunteer regiment.

Yours, truly,

WINFIFLD SCOTT.

In 1855 he faces around and contends for a longer term of naturalization. Witness the following extract from page 23 of his pamphlet entitled "The origin, principles and purposes of the American party:"

"We say that experience has demonstrated that the great mass of *European* emigrants are *unfit recipients* of American citizenship without a *longer* and more thorough probation.

"In practice the great mass of naturalized citizens are found not to have that knowledge of and attachment to our American institutions which fit them for safe recipients of political power."

IV. IN REGARD TO THE WHIG PARTY.

In 1852 he was their chosen electoral candidate, and every where advocated the claims of that party to public confidence and support, no where intimating that it was "broken down," "discredited," "dishonest," or "corrupt."

In 1855 he speaks of both it and the Democratic party as follows :

"But the territorial debates of 1850 gave the death-blow to both these parties. They met together to plunder; they stood face to face—old, decrepid, weak and false, rallying followers in obsolete watchwords; but all ears were holden by different tones." * * * *

"In 1852, the rumps of two broken-down and *discredited factions* usurped the names of national parties, entered the field under old platforms—and waged a scandalous contest of bribery and fraud, which ended in the elevation of President Pierce."

V. IN REGARD TO THE POWER OF CONGRESS OVER THE SUBJECT OF SLAVERY IN THE TERRITORIES OF THE UNITED STATES.

In 1849 Mr. Davis wrote a series of articles in "The Alexandria Gazette," over the signature of "Hampden," the authorship of which he avows in his published correspondence with Mr. May. In those articles he broadly contends for the supremacy of Congress over the Territories, and maintains expressly the right and power of Congress to abolish slavery therein; witness the following extracts from the article of Mr. Davis, signed "Hampden," and published in the Alexandria Gazette of the 3d of May, 1849:

"THE POWER OF CONGRESS OVER THE TERRITORIES.—I am indebted to the author of the article signed "Halifax," for the opportunity he has afforded me to illustrate the nature of the error which haunts and oppresses the South, as to the power of Congress over the Territories. * * *

"If then the power to legislate and establish governments and courts, and to administer justice, exist 'to a certain extent,' as is admitted, and if the existence or exclusion of slavery be a fit subject of municipal legislation, as seems also to be admitted and has been expressly decided, it remains for our author to assign the reason *why* Congress may not legislate on the subject—why its powers stop short *here* though covering *ult* the rest of the field of municipal legislation. * * *

"Now, in reply to his question, I say, I do mean it for an argument, and a decisive one, when I say, *Congress has the same power over slavery that it has over the other relations of husband and wife, master and servant, master and apprentice, parent and child.* * * *

"If the South, and more particularly, if the Locofoco madmen of the South really desire any thing more than a good pretext for political agitation against Gen. Taylor's administration, *they must not go against* the passage of the

Wilmot Proviso, but for the *repeal of the existing laws excluding slavery*. Are they fools enough to suppose they would succeed? Or would not that be to insult the *North* as much as the *North* is now supposed to insult the *South*? Or what is vastly more to them than civil discord—are they not still, and silent, and dark on *that* subject, because to agitate it might spoil and disturb the recently formed skin that is now just drawn over the ghastly wounds which not long ago severed their party in twain and prostrated all its hopes of dominion in the dust?

In 1855, he speaks in a very different tone on this question so vital to the *South*. Witness the following extract from his speech as reported in the *American Sentinel*, a *Know Nothing* paper, of 22d September, 1855 :

“He maintains and asserts the unconstitutionality of that section of the ordinance of 1787, assuming for ever to prohibit slavery or involuntary servitude on the soil to which it applied; and he also maintains *the unconstitutionality* of that provision under its new name of *Wilmot Proviso*—which assumes unconstitutionally to control a *sovereign State*, exclude it from the footing of the original States, and usurps a power not only nowhere granted, but distinctly excluded by the Constitution, and so the Supreme Court have expressly decided.

“And for an authentic exposition of his views on the general subject, he referred to and adopted the resolutions of the Maryland Legislature, of February, 1849.”

By this extract it will be seen that Mr. Davis *now* refers to the Maryland resolutions of 1849, for “the most authentic exposition of his views.”

Those celebrated resolutions expressly and emphatically deny the *right of Congress* to exclude slavery from the territories, as may be seen by the following extract from the resolutions, No. 37, at the session of 1849 :

Resolved unanimously, That the territories of the United States belong to the several States of this Union, and the Congress of the United States cannot rightfully pass any law, or do any act which is calculated to prevent or deter the citizens of any of the said States from removing to and settling with their property of every description, upon said territories.

VI. IN REGARD TO THE HONORING OF FOREIGNERS BY THE PEOPLE AND GOVERNMENT.

In 1852, Mr. Davis, on page 345 of the *War of Ormuzd and Ahriman*, in speaking of foreigners who come here for an asylum, used this language: "And people and *government* delight in doing honor to the persecuted children of liberty."

In 1855, to gratify his new friends, on page 26 of his pamphlet entitled "*The Origin, Principles and Purposes of the American Party*," he takes the opposite ground and says: "We, therefore, will not elect or appoint any person of foreign birth to American offices."

VII. IN REGARD TO THE PROSCRIPTION OF AMERICAN CATHOLICS.

It is a fact well known in this city, that as Whig Elector, Mr. Davis did, in 1852, in Monument Square and elsewhere, oppose the election of Gen. Pierce, because the constitution of New Hampshire disqualified Catholics from holding office, and therefore, as Mr. Davis then argued, no man from such a State should be elected to the Presidency. But on page 32 of his pamphlet entitled "*The Origin, Principles and Purposes of the American Party*," Mr. Davis in 1855 undertakes to proscribe *all American Catholics*, even the "American Catholics with *American principles* in their bosoms," as equally guilty in their conduct with those whom he terms "foreign papists." Witness the following extract from page 33 of his pamphlet entitled "*The Origin, Principles and Purposes of the American Party*."

"American Catholics with American principles in their bosoms—and we know not a few of such—have small right to complain that we confound them with the crowd of foreign papists whose acts they do not approve. They associate themselves to the acts of the foreign papists by silence. They could rebuke them and do not. If they fear the effect of an open rebuke, are they not giving too good ground for the fear that they prefer the apparent unity of their church to the integrity of the Republic? If they will not distinguish themselves from the foreign papists by

their conduct, by taking the part of the Republic against their fellow religionists who are perverting their church while they are corrupting the State, can they justly blame us for not making a discrimination which they do not give us the means to make?"

This pamphlet was printed during last summer, and since the meeting of the Philadelphia council, and it breathes the spirit of *wholesale proscription* of all Catholics.

This was then the rallying cry of Mr. Davis against all Catholics, even those who had "American principles in their bosoms."

Will it be believed that in less than three short months he took all this back, as he had done with all his other antecedents?

In September, 1855, if we are to believe the report of his speech in accepting his nomination for Congress, as found in "The American Sentinel," (then an organ of his party,) of 22d September, 1855, Mr. Davis declared as follows:—

"No law is proposed, no disability suggested, no privilege revoked touching any *Catholic's* faith. *Nor is any Catholic excluded from the votes of the American party on account of his faith.*"

We do not believe that this statement is true, as we are quite sure that no Catholic can receive the vote of the American party; and we certainly know that Eben Faxon, a native of the United States, was rejected by the Know Nothing Council as judge of elections in the 11th Ward of this city, on the single ground that he was a Catholic.

VIII. MR. DAVIS HAD FOR YEARS BEEN ENGAGED IN OPPOSING THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY AND ALL ITS PRINCIPLES.

He was while a Whig the earnest advocate of a high protective tariff, of a distribution of the public lands, of internal improvements, and the establishment of a National Bank. After having vainly opposed the Democratic party on all these national questions, he turns around in the present year of 1855, and announces *ex cathedra* as the

platform of his new party, the very Democratic principles which as a Whig he had always denied. He thus comes in and boldly and shamelessly to steal democratic thunder and appropriate it to his own use and benefit. The proof of these assertions is found in the following extract from pages 44-5 of his pamphlet entitled "The Origin, Principles and Purposes of the American Party:"

"We regard the people as having manifested in the most authentic manner—

"That the public lands shall not be squandered gratuitously on every idler who may see fit to squat on land he has not the energy to buy and therefore is not likely to reclaim :

"That the currency ought not to be subjected to the control of any private corporation, but regulated by the laws of trade tempered by the moderate legislation and guardian care of Government now embodied in the acts of Congress:

"That vast and expensive systems of roads, canals, rail roads, ought not to be undertaken by the General Government: but that appropriation of reasonable amounts, for harbors, rivers, light-houses and military or postal communications of a national character may be made: and that the Government may well aid in securing the great lines which must bind the Pacific with the Atlantic States into one indissoluble empire:

"That a high protective tariff is at once unwise and needless: but while the wants of the Government shall continue to be supplied from duties, they may and should be so distributed among the articles of consumption as to convert the burthen of taxation into an incidental relief to our agricultural, commercial, mechanical, and laboring classes with equal impartial justice—according to the principles of the tariff of 1846 and its subsequent modifications."

IX. IN RESPECT TO THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

In 1855 Mr. Davis, on page 27 of his pamphlet entitled "The Origin, Principles and Purposes of the American Party," declares in reference to the principles of his present party as follows :

"It founds *public schools* where every citizen may be freely instructed in every thing that pertains to a good citizen, carefully excluding every thing of sectarian religion, but listening to no plea for the exclusion of any thing else.'

Yet it was only in 1849 that this same Mr. Davis, while a citizen of Alexandria, voting on a property qualification, voted with 57 others against the establishment of free schools, while 264 of his fellow-citizens holding property in that town, voted in favor of their establishment, as seen by the following :

From the Virginia Sentinel, Oct. 30th, 1855

"THE CONGRESSIONAL CANVASS IN BALTIMORE.—Hon. Henry May and H. Winter Davis, Esq., who are opposing candidates for Congress in Baltimore, are well known in our city, and are both descended on one side from our old residents. Mr. Davis resided here for several years, and up to the period of his becoming a citizen of Baltimore.

"In replying to some very pertinent and troublesome questions that Mr. May propounded to him, about his authorship of certain newspaper articles in the '*Alexandria Gazette*,' in which he very *zealously advocated* the constitutionality of the Wilmot Proviso, as we all here know, [for the articles were read at the time with great surprise, and were very fully confuted,] Mr. Davis inquires of Mr. May about his opinions upon the 'Catholic School Bill' and the Common School system, &c.

"When we read these inquiries we were at a loss to know what these subjects had to do with the qualifications or duties of a candidate for, or member of Congress. And our reflections have not been able to relieve our perplexities, unless, indeed, Mr. Davis was fishing (and his letter has that appearance) for some opinion of his competitor, upon which he could found an appeal to prejudice or bigotry. But we could not but be pleased to observe that the attempt to excite prejudice about a subject which does not concern the post to which these gentlemen aspire, so signally failed. For it seems that Mr. May at least is clear of the vice of holding opinions unfriendly to education, or favoring the sectarian views of the Catholics, or some of them, upon this subject. It appears that he "has never signed or written any paper or petition," upon these dangerous subjects. His skirts are clear of even the smell of

the noxious smoke; but we think, unless we are greatly mistaken, Mr. Davis has been scorched by the fire that he would now try to kindle around the hopes of his competitor.

"We greatly wonder that Mr. Davis should be so forgetful of his antecedents as to make any allusion to this general subject of public schools at all. He must have been smarting under Mr. May's interrogatories, and anxious to make reprisals. He not only failed however, but has added to his troubles.

"As the subject of public schools has been brought up by Mr. Davis, and treated as matter belonging to a Congressional canvass, it is proper that the voters of Baltimore should be informed that Henry Winter Davis, Esq., the same who is now before them as candidate for Congress, did on Thursday, the 27th day of April, in the year 1849, (he being then a citizen of Alexandria,) *vote against* the establishment of a system of District Free Schools in this city, according to the provisions of our general law for improving the means of education, passed the 5th day of March, 1846; and which law allowed any county to establish this improved system, upon a sufficient vote (two-thirds) and to tax themselves for its maintenance: 'and all the white children, male and female, above the age of six years, resident within the respective districts, (into which the County was laid off,) shall be entitled to receive tuition at said schools, *free of charge.*' Such is the language of this law.

"We say Mr. Davis voted with *only* 57 others in Alexandria, against this system, while 264 of our tax-paying citizens voted in favor of it. The great disproportion of this vote will show the merits of the new system, in the opinion of the intelligent citizens who were to bear the burdens it would impose. And this will be more apparent when we state that only freeholders and tax payers were then allowed to vote on this proposition. The election was held *before* our new Constitution was adopted, which enlarged the then restricted right of suffrage.

"We repeat it, that but 58 freeholders and tax payers in this city voted against this system of free education. Mr. Henry Winter Davis was one of these. The voting here was then, and is now, *viva voce*, each voter's name and vote being recorded. The poll books are now in the office of the County Court Clerk, and any one may satisfy himself of the truth of our statement by applying there.

"Upon this state of the case, we think Mr. May should now *in his turn*, ask Mr. Davis *his own question*: 'Whether he is opposed to the Common School System?' or rather, whether 'he did *not prove* this, by *voting* to deny such a system of free education here?' Let the canvass be a fair one; let Mr. Davis now toe the mark, as Mr. May has done at his demand."

Was it not strange that with such a reminiscence staring him in the face, Mr. Davis should have had the hardihood to inquire of Mr. May for his (Mr. May's) "writings," if any, "on the school question." See the correspondence between May and Davis as published.

X. IN REGARD TO SECRET AND OATH-BOUND SOCIETIES.

In 1852 Mr. Davis wrote as follows: "*The forms of Democratic Government admit of no concealment. The quarrels are as open as the unity, the peace and the love.*" See the War of Ormuzd and Ahriman, 352. Yet in 1855 we find the same Mr. Davis, a member in the third degree "and the candidate" *par excellence*," of a *secret, oath-bound* party shrouding *its plans and movements* in concealment and midnight darkness.

That these are true extracts from the writings of Mr. Davis may be seen by calling at the office of the Baltimore Republican.

JEFFERSON.

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